

2 Corinthians 2:5-11 - 2018-10-07

Call to Worship: Psalm 51:1-2

Scripture Reading: Psalm 51:3-15

Sermon: "This Punishment Inflicted By the Majority" 2 Corinthians 2:5-11

Benediction: Psalm 51:16-18

2 Corinthians 2:5-11 But if anyone has caused grief, he has not grieved me, but all of you to some extent--not to be too severe. (6) This punishment which was inflicted by the majority is sufficient for such a man, (7) so that, on the contrary, you ought rather to forgive and comfort him, lest perhaps such a one be swallowed up with too much sorrow. (8) Therefore I urge you to reaffirm your love to him. (9) For to this end I also wrote, that I might put you to the test, whether you are obedient in all things. (10) Now whom you forgive anything, I also forgive. For if indeed I have forgiven anything, I have forgiven that one for your sakes in the presence of Christ, (11) lest Satan should take advantage of us; for we are not ignorant of his devices.

INTRODUCTION

As you know, we as a church are dealing with a case of a man in the church who has been acting in an exemplary manner in the assembly on the Lord's Day, but has been living unrepentant in sinful conduct in business the rest of the week, a pattern sustained over the course of years. The church elders, along with the witnesses to this pattern of living, presented this to you last week.

In the sermon, I expounded 1 Corinthians chapter 5, the passage in the bible that most closely lines up with the matter as it has been presented to the pastors. We are leading the church to understand that scriptural procedure, and to follow it in this case.

The history and doctrine recorded in 1 Corinthians 5 is continued in 2 Corinthians 2, which we open together today. Please look at this with me, that our Lord may help us further in knowing His wisdom and instructions for us in this very difficult matter.

TEXT

2 Corinthians 2:4-8

BODY

- I. The Underlying Motivation in This Action Was Love (verse 4)
 - A. Paul wanted them to know his heart toward the church and the man he commanded to be put out of the church
 1. he wept as he wrote or dictated the letter
 2. his weeping was from affliction and anguish of heart
 3. he had no desire to cause them grief
 4. but that they would know how much he loved them; that he loved them enough to do what was for their good even though highly unpleasant
 - B. This is true of our hearts toward one another in this church, also
 1. in all these relationships
 - a) all of us here toward one another
 - b) all of us here toward the man we are dealing
 - c) all of us here toward the man's family
 - d) the church elders, and the witnesses testifying, toward the rest of the church; and the rest of the church toward us
 2. we have the same affections as Paul showed us he had
 - a) it is with anguish of heart that we speak of this
 - b) we do nothing out of desire to cause anyone sorrow or grief
 - c) but we do what we are doing out of love
 - (1) for our Savior
 - (2) for His church
 - C. APPLICATION: Take care here, lest other motivations rise up from your flesh and corrupt your conduct and the church's

The underlying motivation in this action was love.

- II. The Man Living Unrepentant in Sin Grieved the Whole Church (verse 5)
 - A. Geneva, ASV caused sorrow Moffat/RSV/ESV caused pain
 - B. "If" does not mean that *maybe* the man has *not* caused any sorrow; it is just a mild way of saying that he *has* caused grief, sorrow, pain
 - C. But Paul does not want the church to think the problem is that the man has caused Paul sorrow; the problem with the man causing sorrow is primarily that he has grieved the whole church
 - D. This is true of our case, also.
 1. Let the church not think that the issue is the grief the person has caused to one or a few people.
 2. Let the church not think that the men testifying to the sin are causing the grief, nor that the church elders are causing the grief, but recognize that the man living sinfully is causing the grief for the whole church

The underlying motivation in this action was love.
The man living unrepentant in sin grieved the whole church.

- III. The Man Was Punished or Rebuked By the Majority of the Church (verse 5)
- A. Recall from 1 Cor 5 that the apostle instructed the church, when assembled, to put away the man from among them
 - B. Here the apostle refers to that as “punishment” or “rebuke”
 - C. The apostle says it was done by the “many” or “majority”
 - 1. on the one hand, it was done not by the church’s elders only, but by the church, the congregation
 - 2. on the other hand, the agreement that this be done was an agreement of the majority of the church; it was not necessarily unanimous; that is
 - a) more than half of the church agreed this be done
 - b) less than half may not have agreed that it should be done
 - c) yet, by agreement of the majority, it was done
 - D. This is where the case stands today in this church; the church’s elders have informed the church that we see the need for the church to expell this person, as a form of rebuke or punishment; since this was news to many of you as recently as ten days ago, we are giving time for you to learn and contemplate what is known about this case; before long, we want you, the church, to express your will that this man be expelled from the church

The underlying motivation in this action was love.
The man living unrepentant in sin grieved the whole church.
The man was punished or rebuked by the majority of the church.

- IV. The Punishment or Rebuke By the Majority Proved Sufficient (verse 6b)
- A. It is taken for granted here that the man had, by this time, sufficiently demonstrated repentance from the sin for which he had been expelled from the church
 - 1. obvious just by thinking about it
 - 2. Luke 17:3-4 Take heed to yourselves. If your brother sins against you, rebuke him; and if he repents, forgive him. (4) And if he sins against you seven times in a day, and seven times in a day returns to you, saying, 'I repent,' you shall forgive him."
 - a) Gill: as often as he sins, and appears to be truly sensible of it, and humble for it, and makes acknowledgments of it; and not only barely in words professes his concern for it, but there is reason to believe that he is heartily grieved for it, and to hope that he will behave better for the future
 - b) Wesley: That is, if he give sufficient proof that he does really repent, after having sinned ever so often, receive him just as if he

had never sinned against thee. But this forgiveness is due only to real penitents.

3. commentary on this verse
 - a) Poole: It is plain [from verse 7] that this person expressed abundant sorrow.
 - b) Gill: there appeared signs of true repentance...in the process of time...the person thus dealt with has given the church satisfaction as to the truth and genuineness of his repentance
- B. This is what we hope for in the case before us in this church
 1. when the majority of the church has agreed to put away the immoral man from among us
 2. we hope that the man will, by God's gracious work in him, respond in godly sorrow producing repentance
 3. that repentance will then be shown consistently over time as the man bears good fruit, as he produced good fruit in keeping with repentance, as the fruit of the Spirit becomes evident in his life: love, joy, peace, longsuffering, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control; as he shows himself to be like Zacchaeus
- C. Because of the nature of this man's sin, for which he is being rebuked or punished, we are especially cautious regarding the acceptance of the man's expressions of repentance

The underlying motivation in this action was love.

The man living unrepentant in sin grieved the whole church.

The man was punished or rebuked by the majority of the church.

The punishment or rebuke by the majority proved sufficient.

- V. The Man Having Repented, He Was to Be Reconciled to the Church
 - A. Several things mentioned that comprise reconciliation
 1. Forgiveness
 2. Comfort
 3. Confirming or reaffirming of love to him
 - B. When the man's repentance is judged by the church to be authentic, sufficiently attested, then the church is not to
 1. delay in reconciling
 2. refuse to reconcile
 3. increase the rebuke or punishment
 - C. Instead, the church is to reconcile the man to the church, in part so that he is not overwhelmed with sorrow
 - D. Certainly this is what we all desire in this case

There is more in verses 9-11, which I plan to expound with you next week.

CONCLUSION

Let us so conduct ourselves now that in the future, when this is all in the past, this can be said of us:

Their underlying motivation in this action was love.

The man living unrepentant in sin grieved the whole church.

The man was punished or rebuked by the majority of the church.

The punishment or rebuke by the majority proved sufficient.

The man having repented, was reconciled to the church

Amen.

Henry (on Luke 17:3):

If he be guilty of gross sin, to the offence of the Christian community he is a member of, let him be gravely and mildly reprov'd for his sin, and, upon his repentance, received into friendship and communion again. This the apostle calls forgiveness, 2Co_2:7.

Prelude: Grace 195 "You Are My All in All"

Camille: flute

Noah: trumpet - see attached in D

Anna: piano

Trinity 206 "Up from the Grave He Arose"

Camille: piano - see attached in Bb or transpose

Noah: direct or trumpet - play from hymnal in C

Anna: clarinet - play from hymnal in C

Grace 162 "The Perfect Wisdom of Our God"

Camille: flute

Noah: trumpet - see attached in C

Anna: piano

Trinity 174 "Praise the Savior Now and Ever"

Camille: piano

Noah: trumpet - see attached in E

Anna: sing

Trinity 402 "Amazing Grace"

Camille: flute

Noah: trumpet - see attached in A

Anna: piano